Railway Level Crossings.

Q.—2. **Mr. Y. V. MUNISWAMI IYER** (Chennapatna Municipality) —

Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(*a*) the number of level-crossings on the Mysore State and other Railways in the State;

(*b*) the number of level-crossings which are kept open all the 24 hours of the day for the movement of carts, etc.;

(*c*) the number of level-crossings which are closed for traffic between 5 P.M. and 8 A.M.;

(*d*) whether it has come to their notice that the public are much inconvenienced on account of the obstruction caused by such closure?

A.—**The SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT for RAILWAYS (Rajasevaprasaktha B. T. Kesavaiengar).**—

(*a*) 835 including 593 field-crossings which are not manned.

(*b*) 106.

(*c*) 136.

(*d*) Where complaints are received, relief has been given to the extent possible.

NOTE.—The particulars given relate to the sections worked by the Mysore State Railway.

Mr. Y. V. MUNISWAMI IYER.—From the answer it is seen that 136 level-crossings are closed for traffic between 5 P.M. and 8 A.M. Are the Government aware of the extent of inconvenience caused to the general public as a result of closing the gates for such a long period as 15 hours continuously?

Mr. B. T. KESAVAIENGAR.—Government are aware that there is some inconvenience to the public.

Mr. Y. V. MUNISWAMI IYER.—If so, why not make arrangements to keep the gates open always?

Mr. B. T. KESAVAIENGAR.—The question is one of cost. To keep all these gates open always, watchmen have to be posted at each one of them and they have to be provided with quarters. Even apart from the question of quarters, at the rate of Rs. 15 per month for each watchman, it would cost nearly Rs. 25,000 per annum.

Mr. Y. V. MUNISWAMI IYER.—Were the villages formed first or the railway lines? Which of the two deserves preference?

Mr. B. T. KESAVAIENGAR.—That question apart, keeping the gates open depends upon the actual needs of the traffic.

Mr. Y. V. MUNISWAMI IYER.—If for example, a woman in labour or a patient in a serious condition has to be taken to the taluk or district headquarter for immediate attention, but is held up on the way as a result of these level-crossings being closed, what should happen to the patient? Can mere want of funds be allowed to come in the way of saving precious lives?

The GENERAL MANAGER, MYSORE STATE RAILWAY (Mr. Y. K. Ramachandra Rau).—Wherever the traffic is heavy, the gates are kept open and watchmen stationed.

Mr. Y. V. MUNISWAMI IYER.—Between Channapatna and Maddur, for instance, for a distance of about 12 miles there are as many as 5 level-crossings. Maddur is a populous taluk with very heavy traffic and if these gates are kept closed for 15 hours together, would not much inconvenience be caused to the public?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—In the case of all level-crossings, in respect of which representations were made that gates should not be kept closed throughout the night, needful action has been taken as desired.

Mr. Y. V. MUNISWAMI IYER.—Does it mean that there are no other cases in which action remains to be taken? Is it possible for the people to bring to notice each and every case in which such action is called for?

Mr. PRESIDENT.—We shall consider whether we could not give any relief in the particular cases mentioned by you.

Mr. A. VENKATESIAH.—If the gates are to be shifted elsewhere, who must bear the cost?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—If they are gates existing for over 10 years, the people, *i.e.*, the municipalities concerned, must bear the cost

In other cases, and also in cases where the railway authorities do it on their own initiative, the department would meet the cost.

Mr. J. ASWATHANARAYANA RAO.—If railway gates on trunk roads are kept closed all through the night, how can the department justify its action?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—Watchmen are appointed for all such gates and they will open the gates whenever required.

Mr. J. ASWATHANARAYANA RAO.—Are the Government aware that a gate on the Bangalore—Bellary Road (between Avathi and Dodjala) is kept closed for hours together even during the day, and that no watchman is seen on duty there so that after the train passes, some one has to come all the way from the station and open the gate?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—As far as possible, the department is putting an end to such inconveniences.

Mr. S. C. MALLIAH.—The General Manager was pleased to say that needful action has been taken to obviate inconvenience wherever it was brought to notice. In respect of the 136 gates referred to in the answer to (*c*), have no representations been made so far bringing to notice the inconveniences caused to traffic, etc.

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—None so far. At any rate no such representation is pending disposal at present.

Mr. S. C. MALLIAH.—If such representations are made in future, will they be considered and necessary relief given?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—Yes.

Mr. M. SUBBIAH.—What will be the actual cost to the department to appoint a whole-time watchman for every gate?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—A pay of Rs. 15 per month in addition to the cost of providing a small building.

Mr. M. SUBBIAH.—Is it not possible to employ local people as gatemen on somewhat smaller pay?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—We shall be glad if people who are prepared to work on smaller pay are available.

Mr. M. SUBBIAH.—If such people come forward, will they be employed?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—We can employ them as vacancies arise. But I must add that in most of these level-crossings, there is no cart traffic at all to justify the appointment of whole-time gatemen.

Mr. M. SUBBIAH.—Was not a representation made that the level-crossing at Sabbinaguppe between French-Rocks and Yeliyur should not be kept closed?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—Perhaps a long time back and not recently.

Mr. M. SUBBIAH.—Is there a gateman at present there?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—No.

Mr. M. SUBBIAH.—Will arrangements be made to keep the gate open by posting a gateman to that level-crossing?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—If the necessity for it is established.

Mr. TIPPU SULTAN ALI KHAN.—Are the Government aware that even in Mysore city, in spite of there being gatemen at each gate, the gates are frequently closed for long periods and much inconvenience is caused to traffic?

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—Needful action has been taken to remove this inconvenience wherever possible.

Mr. TIPPU SULTAN ALI KHAN.—The gatemen are not responsible for it. They have instructions to close the gate as soon as a train leaves the concerned station. Why not adopt the bell system so that the gate may be closed only when the train actually leaves the station? Otherwise, the watchman closes the gate at the usual hour whether or not the train has left.

Mr. Y. K. RAMACHANDRA RAU.—As far as possible we are adopting the bell system in important level-crossings near stations. This is under consideration for level-crossings in Mysore city limits.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE BUDGET—*contd.*

Mr. B. CHAMIAH congratulated the Government on having been able to